

MARTIN REDFERN'S OATH.

BY ETHEL F. HEDDLE,

Author of "*Marjorie Gordon: Heroine or Fanatic?*" "*Fifeshire Tales*," "*Cobweb's Promise*," etc.



"His garden had never afforded him half so much pleasure before."

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CHAPTER VI.—(Continued.)

"I wonder if he is mortally offended," Mrs. Redfern soliloquised meanwhile, as they drove home; "but what a cruel, obstinate old creature! Fancy my dear old dad behaving like that! I *can't* fancy it! 'Marry the man you like, and be happy in your own way, Livy,' he used to say; and I believe he'd have been pleased if I'd married a poor man without a penny, so long as he was good and honest, and that we loved each other! Just as long as I was happy! My dear old dad! My dear, kind old father!"

And here she put her handkerchief to her eyes with a suppressed sob—actually in Piccadilly—and to Lily's extreme horror. Lily, who was very proper and well-behaved, really scarcely liked to look!

Mrs. Redfern did not see her husband till the dinner hour, and then the presence of the servants prevented any private conversation. When they were left alone, however, she began—

"I took Lily to Hillsthorpe to-day, Mark, to see your uncle."

Mark frowned. "I told you not to go there, often."

"And I don't! He told me about his daughter!"

"What?"

"How you startled me!" she cried. "What is there to make you start like that? Did you fancy I should be jealous, that you never told me about her? Was that it?"

But he replied to her question with an abrupt "pshaw!" adding fiercely, "What made him refer to the subject?"

"I saw her picture, and told him I had seen it. Was she pretty?"

"No—well enough."

"Well, I think he behaved very harshly! The poor thing could not help not liking you. And she loved the other man! I think she was quite right!"

"Did you express that opinion to my uncle?"

"Of course I did!"

"I do think, Olivia, you are about the most senseless and tactless woman I know," he cried irritably. "What business is it of yours? Why should *you* interfere?"

"I'm sorry for the girl. I was just thinking, coming home, how differently my father would have acted!"

"They are not parallel cases," Mr. Redfern said, his anger making him unusually spiteful; "*your* father would have been glad that you should marry any gentleman, whether he had money or no! My uncle had both the money and the good birth on his side. Ella flung herself away. You and she were different people!"

"I daresay. All the same you need not sneer, Mark! My father was not a gentleman, you say, and you never can get over the fact that he began life as a shop-boy; but he was an honest, honourable man for all that, and he behaved liberally to you! And I won't hear you sneer at him, there! But we won't quarrel over the thing. Only I wish you'd try and find out about the girl. Will you?"

"No! Mind your own business; I mind mine."

Then rising, he pushed away his chair.

For the second time that day Ella had spoilt his appetite.

And Mrs. Redfern, left alone, thought she had never seen her husband so easily made angry.

She did not quite understand all the bearings of the case yet; but there was no use questioning Mark. He was horribly cross then, and for days after, and Mrs. Mark sighed a little as she went upstairs. It was not all happiness in the beautiful house where these two had all that money could buy. For love, the most beautiful thing in this world, was not there, nor the secret of all true peace and happiness. And without this precious secret, is there ever happiness in this sad world of sorrow and shadow? Only one Light can

make the shadows flee away, and can shine through all gloom; without it we are as strangers and pilgrims groping amidst the darkness, restless and lost. Happy are those who seek the Light, for, seeking, they are sure to find!

CHAPTER VII.

DOT AND HER OLD GENTLEMAN.

THE price of the pictures paid the doctor's and chemist's bills and settled Mrs. Driver's account; but even the most careful saving could not make it last for ever. In one respect the matter did not prove satisfactory, for Mr. Smith, the art-middleman, chose to consider himself aggrieved, and would accept no other commissions. Why he was offended he did not say.

Robert was a little better now. He was able to paint for several hours at a time, and he had twice been out for a short walk, leaning on Ella's arm; yet he was still so easily tired that she was very anxious, and anxiety as to the future, she knew, kept him back also. Mrs. Redfern had never fulfilled her promise of coming to see the pictures. Ella wondered if Mark had prevented her; that, too, was a disappointment, for the dealer to whom she had taken the others had failed to sell them.

Dot had never been back to Hillsthorpe, though she had by no means forgotten either it or the old gentleman.

One day she had been watching Mrs. Driver ironing in the kitchen, when she suddenly looked up.

"Dot has never seen the darden adain."

"What garden? Mr. Fairlie's? Well, I'm going there now; so you can go and ask your ma if I can take you."

Dot trotted off delightedly, and her mother was only too glad to have her out of doors.

When they reached Hillsthorpe, Mrs. Leslie was at first rather dubious about disturbing her master, but remembering that he really seemed to have taken a fancy to the child, she at last took her to the study.

When Mr. Redfern saw his visitor, his keen face perceptibly softened, and he accepted the housekeeper's apology for troubling him, with unusual complacency.

"Yes, you may leave her for a little," he said, and then, when Mrs. Leslie had gone, he held out his hand to Dot.

"How are you to-day, little one? You did not forget the garden?"

"Dot is 'tite well, s'ank you," she responded, laying her hand confidently in the old man's, and he was struck anew with the delicate beauty of the little face and the sweetness of the lovely eyes, as she looked up at him. "Dot never *fordot* about the darden."

She moved away then towards the window, and he lifted her on the chair where she stood, for a long time lost in admiration and quite silent. At last she turned round, drawing her breath with a deep sigh of unutterable delight, "Oh, it's a *lovely* darden, and is it all *yours*, ole gen'lëman?"

"Yes, all mine," he answered, putting one hand on her shoulder; "should you like to walk in it? Shall I take you out for a little walk before it is quite dark?"

A rapturous smile was his only answer, and then Dot clambered down and stood by his side patiently, while he took a soft felt hat from the table and got his stick.

They went downstairs then, Dot's hand in the old man's, and out into the garden. That was about the pleasantest quarter of an hour Mr. Redfern had spent for a long time—his garden had never afforded him half so much pleasure before. He showed her everything—flowers, shrubs and trees, and the famous statue amongst the rose-bushes near the house—telling her how he had planted this bush him-

self, and how this flower had not done well, and how this one revived in a new place, Dot listening all the time with a rapt attentive face.

Mrs. Leslie could hardly believe her eyes when she saw them coming in at length, Dot's pinafore full of flowers and her face radiant.

"I can't get over his taking such a fancy to the little thing," she said to Mrs. Driver; "and listen how he is talking to her—he never utters a word to *me*, sometimes, for days together!"

"You bring her again soon," Mr. Redfern commanded, as he led Dot himself to the old woman; "she is pleased with the garden, and the flowers won't last long now." And then, after slipping two half-crowns into her grasp, he held out his hand to Dot, and she put up her face to be kissed. She did it quite naturally, and she even patted his wrinkled hand confidently.

"Good-bye, and you will come again? Perhaps the yellow rose will be out then, Dot."

"Ses, Dot will tome."

After this it grew into a recognised thing that Mrs. Driver should bring Dot to Hillsthorpe twice every week. She told Ella that Mr. Fairlie had "taken a fancy to the child," and Ella was very willing that her little one should have the pleasure. She had sold one more picture for a small sum, and Robert seemed a little stronger. She went on hoping for the best; hope is always hard to kill.

Mr. Redfern had grown strangely, intensely fond of this child, who had the eyes of the little girl in the picture upstairs, though it was only a chance likeness, and he longed for her coming, and kept her longer with him each night. Somehow—and quite apart from this strange likeness, which doubtless, and utterly as he would have denied it, had first taken his fancy—she suited him as no other woman or child—excepting, perhaps, his wife—had ever done! She listened to all his talk with the quiet attention of a grown-up person, and she talked to him with a sweet, childish confidence which was strangely attractive to the old man. She asked no inquisitive questions, and trod upon none of his mental corns!

And she liked him, too—was growing very fond of her "ole gen'lëman," as she still called him. He took her on his feeble knee now, and she would sit there quite at ease, till he was tired and put her down; then she would remain contentedly on a stool at his feet, looking up into his face with the eyes that always seemed to thrill him with a mixture of remorse and love.

It was a strange sight to see the two together. One would have fancied that there could be nothing in common between such an ill-assorted pair, and yet Dot's little voice talked happily and incessantly, and then, if her "ole gen'lëman" was tired, she would sit happily at his feet, looking at pictures, or spelling out her story softly to herself, in a funny little way she had, running one tiny finger along the line, and appealing to the old man for help if she came to any word beyond her capability and comprehension. And then he would put on his spectacles, and Dot held up the book while he told her—never forgetting to thank him with her polite little "S'ank you; Dot will 'member."

At other times she would inform him of the fact that she had learnt a nice bit of "poltry," as she always called it, and then, standing beside his knee, she would repeat a verse or two of the hymn or childish rhyme, the old man listening gravely, and with deep interest, and never failing to thank and kiss her.

William Allingham's "Fairies" was Dot's favourite. It

was a picture to see her with folded hands before him, repeating the quaint and pretty lines.

Autumn was beginning to creep in, and the days to shorten rapidly, when for a whole week Mr. Redfern never saw his little favourite. He missed her more than he liked to acknowledge, for the child had crept into his heart as no one except his wife, not even Ella, had ever done. He was restless and ill at ease for want of her, and bitterly resentful when Mrs. Leslie urged that Mrs. Driver had not had time to bring the child. "I will pay her," he said, wrathfully, "anything she may ask! And the parents too—tell them that, and say she is to bring her without fail to-morrow." The evenings were long and dull without her, without the hope that any moment the faint knock might come to his door, and the childish voice ask the usual question, "May Dot come in?"

And then he missed the little figure at his feet, the feeling of the pretty hair against his hand, missed most the soft kisses she gave him every evening—oh, he must gain her, adopt her, for his own, altogether. He would give untold gold for her, they must give her up to him, such poor people would never refuse a good offer. And then the treasure would be his own. The next day he would write to them. But the next day Dot came, and he put the matter off.

She was not well. Even his old eyes, unaccustomed as they were to childish faces, noticed that she was very pale one moment, and confessed that she was tired, and leant her little head wearily against his arm; the next, hot and thirsty, and, for the first time since he had known her, a little querulous, bursting once into tears, tears that were so unusual to his happy little Dot. He had told her that a kitten she had been fond of, and played with, was dead; not understanding a child's intense love for such things he told her abruptly, and as a matter of not much consequence, and then, to his intense dismay, she burst into a flood of tears, "Oh, Dot's titten, Dot's titten, Dot's little, dear titten, oh how are it dead?"

He tried to comfort her, offering all the grey kittens to be got for love or money in London; he would go into town the very next day and buy her the most beautiful cat to be had; it was all of no avail, poor Dot sobbed on unconsovably, and Mr. Redfern was at his wits' end.

"Dot," he said at length, pleadingly, "oh dear little Dot, don't cry any more." The child looked up at his dismayed face, and bravely tried to choke down her sobs, and then he lifted her to his knee, and tried to tell her a story, while she listened with the sorrowful, childish eyes, still wet with tears, fixed on his face, catching her breath every now and then with a sob, in the pathetic way little children have, after the storm is over. Mr. Redfern could not bear to hear her.

He was closely watching the small face which had grown so dear to him, and the more he gazed, the more ill he thought her looking.

Her flush had faded now, and she was very pale. It was a thin, wan little face, the blue veins showing their delicate tracery under the white skin, and the small hands in his were hot and dry. She had not smiled, or laughed, Dot's dear, happy laugh, once! What was the matter with his little treasure?

"Is Dot ill?" he asked Mrs. Driver, when as usual he took the child to her in the hall. "She does not seem well; they must take care of her."

"I don't think she's very well, sir," Mrs. Driver answered as she tied on the dimity bonnet; "she's been quiet-like and 'eavy all the week, and her mother's taken hup about 'er; she does heat next to nothing, but she is a child that never complains. Are you hill, Dot?"

"No," said the child, "Dot is only tired, Dot wants muzzer."

"Dear me!" Mr. Redfern muttered perplexedly; "she ought to have change or something. They can't be looking after her. Well, I'll see about it," and then he kissed Dot and sent for a cab in which he put the two, saying she was too tired to walk home.

Dot brightened a little at that, and waved her small hand to him from the window with a faint imitation of her old merry smile, though the face under the flapping dimity sun bonnet was so white, that he turned away hastily as if afraid to look longer. And there was even a suspicious moisture in his sharp eyes when he stood at the window in the dusk. The child was not going to be ill? No, he was only a foolish, stupid old man. But *how* she had crept into his heart.

(Continued on page 81.)

"SWEET SPRING, FULL OF SWEET DAYES AND ROSES."

WELCOME, joyous fairy, tripping through the lea!
Wheresoe'er thou breathest, brooks are running free;
Raptured birds are winging, choiring at thy side,
And the hedges whisper of the summer-tide.

Herald of the roses, garb'd in tender light!
Beams of glory quiver round thy sceptre bright;
Cast thy spell of music all among the trees,
Sway thy fragrant censer on the gentle breeze.

Oh, the vanished winter—long it seemed and chill,
But the cowslips waken all across the hill,
Bluebells twine a garland, primrose fair and calm
Beareth through the forest dew-wet grails of balm.

Spring in royal splendour summons round her feet
Daffodil and crocus, and blue violets sweet;
Like a loving mother, she has bent her head
With her morning kisses, o'er the snowdrops' bed.

Fairy of the springtide! comfort every life
With thy wand of healing end the spirit-strife;
Let thy voice triumphant bid the joy-bells ring—
"Every road of winter leads to golden spring!"

MARGARET HAYCRAFT.



SOMEBODY'S BAIRNIES:

BY JENNIE CHAPPELL,

Author of "An Auntie's Notions about Children."



FEW objects, we feel assured, can appeal more strongly to the tenderest sympathies of the readers of *THE MOTHERS' COMPANION* than a neglected baby. Left uncared for, as hundreds must daily be, while the mother goes to factory or laundry, or to earn by charring her own and children's bread. Left, at best, in the

charge of another busy mother, or the doubtful keeping of some little boy or girl not many years older than itself. Sometimes left, unwashed and unfed, to cry for hours upon the dirty pallet called a bed. Left to scramble, if old enough, about the draughty staircase, getting ear-aches and inflamed eyes, even if some horrible fall does not result in long-continued suffering and disease; or to crawl into the street and sit about on the cold stones, bareheaded and half-clad, until bronchitis supervening lays the foundation of a weak chest for life. Or, perhaps, tied into a ramshackle perambulator, in cutting east wind or broiling sun, to suck a sour and empty bottle, or dislocate its poor little neck in uneasy slumbers, while the small child in charge goes off to play at "hop-scotch" round the corner.

These miseries are the common lot of the infants of the poor, and that many succumb beneath their hardships, the newspaper records too often show. Contrast such circumstances, then, with the surroundings of those fortunate little ones who are daily boarders at Mrs. Hilton's Crèche, in Stepney Causeway—a blessed work, now in the twentieth year of its successful career.

Clean and warm, well and regularly fed, they toddle blissfully about the large rooms, or tumble in safety upon the railed-in mattress which lies on the floor of the nursery, and, with its half-dozen happy occupants, suggests the idea of a pen of little human lambs. Ranged along the walls are cosy swing cots, each furnished with an invention of Mrs. Hilton's, in the shape of holland bands to fasten round the baby and guard against the possibility of a fall. And kind nurses, who are genuinely fond of their tiny lodgers, are at hand to tend them all.

In this day-nursery, on the occasion of our visit, were twenty-six little tots under two years old, and not one of them was crying! Indeed, so sweet were the rosebud faces, and so bright the eyes that grew round with wonder on our entrance, that it was difficult to believe that they ever do cry. But the nurse says that in the morning, when they are being washed, is the most favourable time for judging of the power of their lungs—a chorus of five or six being then occasionally heard.

For a soap-and-water greeting does each youngster receive immediately on its arrival. This is generally found essential.

The clothes they are brought in are taken off and hung up in bags in a draught, to air, and neat, clean garments belonging to the institution are substituted. Every baby has a basin and towel to itself; also, when necessary, a brush. This is to prevent the possible spread of any skin or scalp complaint from which it may be suffering, though for obvious reasons cases of contagious disease cannot be admitted. The little ones are washed thoroughly on the nurse's knee, never put into a bath. "Their mothers would think we were going to drown them," the matron said.

The older children, from two to five years of age, are in another room, but look as clean and happy in their neat holland blouses. When we saw them they were just going to have their "tea" of bread and butter and milk; this is alternated with bread and treacle, or bread and dripping. These little ones are amused, and their dawning intelligence cultivated by the use of kindergarten work and games, picture-books and toys, until five years of age, when they are claimed by the School Board. During the past year a kind friend presented them with a nursery yacht, capable of holding eight children, and the delight it has afforded may well be imagined.

Upstairs is the infirmary, where sickly little ones are tenderly cared for, and fed upon specially nourishing diet. The improvement in the tiny patients' appearance usually brought about by the unwonted comforts of this room are a source of much pleasure to those in charge. "He was as thin as a rabbit when he came," said the nurse, indicating a wee boy of seven months old, whose large, intelligent eyes were turned towards a merrily jingling musical box in the corner. "But he's bonny, now."

All this at a charge to mothers of twopence per head for the twelve-hour day, and to widows only a penny! And from 80 to 100 babies are accommodated every day. During the past twelve months the total number of attendances was 23,000.

From the Crèche we pass into the Orphan Home, where are forty residents of from one to ten years of age. Here boys are kept until four years old, and girls till about nine. At the latter age parents are often able to take them back, or, if not, they are drafted off to the branch Home at Feltham, which has accommodation for sixteen residents, who are being trained for domestic service, and batches of eight children at a time from the London home who require change of air.

The cots in both institutions are prettily named after favourite flowers and herbs. We noted the "Morning Glory," the "Sweetbriar," the "Southernwood," and the

"Christmas Rose." Many of these need "adoption;" and we may mention that, with the mothers' pence, £15 will provide for a child for one year in the Home, £10 in the Infirmary, and £6 in the Crèche.

There are numberless ways of helping forward this good

fruit and flowers; and 'collecting-boxes may be had. One dear little maiden, who is being early taught to find happiness in the pleasure of others, recently celebrated her sixth birthday by providing a grand tea-party treat at the Home for the tiny orphans. She spent her birthday present in



The Day-Nursery.

work, adapted to the means and capabilities of almost everyone. Clothes are especially needed; little frocks for summer and winter wear, flannel petticoats with calico bodies, holland pinafores, underclothing, socks, boots or shoes, for children of from three weeks to nine years, are always acceptable; as are toys, picture-books, provisions of all kinds,

the purchase of sponge-cakes, milk, and bread-and-jam; also bread-and-butter, sprinkled with "hundreds and thousands"—this latter novelty being an especial fancy of her own. She herself presided at the feast, and distributed bon-bons to the delighted children. We feel sure that she did not enjoy the evening a whit less than the happiest of them.

Is not this just the form of charity to touch the heart of every mother who reads these lines? Mrs. Hilton is always willing to impart her valuable experience and advice to others, and a crèche there should certainly be in every town in the kingdom. Surely help for its support would be forthcoming. She whose circle of healthy, merry little ones is a source of unclouded joy would present her thank-offering in pity for those fatherless, or worse than fatherless babes, who are thus thrown upon the care of strangers; she who knows what it is to bend anxiously over a sick child would give the Infirmary a tender place in her heart. The bereaved mother could find no lovelier memorial of her

gathered flower than the perpetual support of an orphaned little one; and the thought of the homeless birdling that her love had provided with a cosy nest, would surely shed a heavenly light about the empty cot at home, making it less lonely and sad. Parents would give out of true fatherly and motherly sympathy, and the childless might here find a satisfying object for their pent-up parent-love. Everybody can surely do something, and there cannot possibly be any good work appealing more eloquently to the tenderness of all.

May Mrs. Hilton, whose funds are now, alas, at an unusually low ebb, meet with speedy and bountiful cheer, and may crèches be multiplied in the land.

GLIMPSES OF SEVERAL MOTHERS.

BY E. C. KENYON.

"Her children arise up, and call her blessed."—Prov. xxxi. 28.



VERY sad is the story of the poet Cowper's life, and very touchingly does he tell us about his first great sorrow in losing his mother. He was then a little delicate, sensitive child not six years old, who used to look forward to his mother's visits to his nursery as one of the greatest pleasures that he had. She was a *Donne* of the race of the poet, and descended by several lines from Henry III. Her husband was the Rev. John Cowper, D.D., and he was chaplain to George II. William was born on November 15th, 1731, in his father's rectory at Berkhamstead.

William's father does not seem to have understood children, and that would no doubt cause his little boy to cling to his mother even more than he would otherwise have done. Late in his life, when his cousin, Mrs. Annie Bodham, sent him his mother's picture, he wrote to her as follows:—

"Every creature that has any affinity to my mother is dear to me, and you, the daughter of her brother, are but one remove distant from her; I love you therefore, and love you much both for her sake and for your own. The world could not have furnished you with a present so acceptable to me as the picture which you have so kindly sent me. I received it the night before last, and received it with a trepidation of nerves and spirits somewhat akin to what I should have felt had its dear original presented herself to my embraces. I kissed it, and hung it where it is the last object that I see at night, and the first on which I open my eyes in the morning. She died when I completed my sixth year; yet I remember her well, and am an ocular witness of the great fidelity of the copy. I remember, too, a multitude of the maternal tendernesses which I received from her, and which have endeared her memory to me beyond expression. There is in me, I believe, more of the *Donne* than of the Cowper, and though I love all of both names, and have a thousand reasons to love those of my own name, yet I feel the bond of nature draw me vehemently to your side."

As Cowper never married there was nothing which

ever filled the place in his heart left vacant by his mother.

But the most eloquent eulogy of her is contained in the poet's lines:—

"My mother! when I learned that thou wast dead,
Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed?
Hover'd thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son,
Wretch even then, life's journey just begun?
Perhaps thou gav'st me, though unfelt, a kiss,
Perhaps a tear, if souls can weep in bliss—
Ah, that maternal smile! it answers—Yes!
I heard the bell toll'd on thy burial day,
I saw the hearse that bore thee slow away,
And, turning from my nursery window, drew
A long, long sigh, and wept a last adieu!"

Then the maid-servants, pitying the grief-stricken child, seem to have held out to him a hope that his mother might return, and so day after day the little wistful face would be watching at the window for the return of the gentle being whom he loved so well. He tells us this in his next lines:—

"Thy maidens, grieved themselves at my concern,
Oft gave me promise of thy quick return.
What ardently I wish'd I long believed,
And disappointed still, was still deceived;
By expectation every day beguiled,
Dupe of to-morrow even from a child.
Thus many a sad to-morrow came and went,
Till, all my stock of infant sorrows spent,
I learn'd at last submission to my lot,
But, though I less deplored thee, ne'er forgot."

Ah! poor child, the loss of his wise and tender mother was soon most disastrous to him, for his father committed the great mistake of at once sending the "little mass of timid and quivering sensibility" to a large boarding school, where he was knocked about and ill-treated, especially by one older boy of about fifteen, who singled him out as a fit object for his bullying propensities. The savage treatment of this boy was such that Cowper said he "impressed such a dread of his figure upon my mind, that I well remember being afraid to lift my eyes upon him higher than to his knees, and that I knew him better by his shoe-buckles than by any other part of his dress."

It is said to have been the recollection of this boarding school, which at a later day inspired his plea for a home education in *Tirocinium*:—

"Then why resign into a stranger's hand
A task as much within your own command,
That God and nature, and your interest too,
Seem with one voice to delegate to you?
Why hire a lodging in a house unknown
For one whose tenderest thoughts all hover round your own?
This second weaning, needless as it is,
How does it lacerate both your heart and his!
The intended stick that loses day by day,
Notch after notch, till all are smooth'd away,
Bears witness long ere his dismissal come
With what intense desire he wants his home."

But of course absence from home at a certain stage of a boy's education is almost a necessity, for contact with other boys, and life amongst them, is a very fitting preparation for contact with the larger world afterwards, and life among its denizens.

In speaking of Cowper, we are led naturally to think of his friend Newton, who induced him to write his Olney hymns. When Cowper was first at Olney, having come to live there with his cousin, Mrs. Unwin, the Reverend John Newton was curate there, and was one of the foremost leaders and preachers of the revival. His name was great, both in the Evangelical Churches within the pale of the Establishment, and amongst the Methodists. He was a brand plucked from the burning. His mother was a pious Dissenter, who was at great pains to store his mind with religious thoughts. He has left on record the following words:—

"My mother, I have heard from many, was a pious and experienced Christian. I was her only child; and as she was of a weak constitution and retired temper, almost her whole employment was the care of my education. I have some faint recollection of her care and of her instructions. At a time when I could not have been more than three years of age, she herself taught me, so that when I was five years old I could read with propriety any common book that offered. She stored my memory, which was then very retentive, with chapters and portions of Scripture, catechisms, hymns, and poems. . . . How far the best education may fall short of reaching the heart will strongly appear in the sequel of my history; yet I think, for the encouragement of pious parents to do their part faithfully to form their children's minds, I may properly propose myself as an instance."

But, alas! his mother died when he was young, and his step-mother was not pious. His father was master of a vessel, and took him to sea when he was eleven. Gradually he drifted into depths of ungodliness, blasphemy, and recklessness of living; he became estranged from home, was impressed, narrowly escaped shipwreck, deserted, and was arrested and flogged as a deserter. In the service of a slave-dealer in Africa he endured much suffering.

We are told his conversion was brought about by the combined influence of Thomas à Kempis, a very narrow escape after terrible sufferings from shipwreck, and of the impressions made by the sights of the mighty storm-tossed deep on a soul which, though outwardly hardened, still retained no doubt much of the memory of a good mother's teaching. It will be remembered that he is the author of that inimitable hymn—

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds."

But now, to turn to another hymn-writer who has perhaps done more for the infancy of the young people of Christian England than any other, we find a couple of interesting incidents told of the mother of Dr. Isaac Watts.

It is recorded in Milner's life of the Doctor that when he was an infant he was often carried by his mother to

the prison where her husband was confined "for conscience' sake," and that Mrs. Watts would frequently be seen sitting on a stone by the prison door, nursing her babe and waiting for admittance.

Her husband was a most respectable schoolmaster who was imprisoned for nonconformity in the persecution during Charles II.'s reign. Isaac's mother was an excellent woman, who, like her son, had a taste for poetic numbers, and it is told of her that when her husband kept a school at Southampton, she used to encourage the boys after their lessons to write verses by giving those who did so the smallest coin in current use as a reward. Her own boy appeared to have been a little touched on this point with zeal for a poet's honour, for one day he distinguished himself by the couplet—

"I write not for a farthing, but to try
How I your farthing writers may outvie."

Isaac Watts was at that time only six years old, and yet he had begun to evince a passion for books. It is related of him that if any money were given to him he would cry delightedly, "Buy a book! buy a book!" His poetical effusions were then so far beyond his years that his mother on one occasion doubted whether some verses he had written could really be his own; whereupon he composed the well-known acrostic which included the letters of his own name.

That Isaac's mother must have taught her children well is, I think, evident enough to anyone who can trace early impressions in the wise yet simple instruction for infant minds of the childless author of—

"How doth the little busy bee;"

and—

"Let dogs delight to bark and bite," etc.

Amongst those mothers who have denied themselves much, that their sons might have the inestimable advantages of a good education, we must mention the poet Cowley's mother. Cowley is said to have been early left to the care of his mother, who, though in straitened circumstances, procured for him with much difficulty a literary education, which was an object she had much at heart, for she had seen great promise in the gradual development of her son's understanding. She had her reward, for she lived to see him a famous man, and when he was so he yielded her the just tribute of gratitude.

Again, it is said of Thomson's mother, who was remarkable for the faithful discharge of her domestic duties, for her piety and for the fervour of her imagination, that when early left a widow she so exerted herself as to obtain for her son the opportunity of pursuing his studies in Edinburgh.

From his mother Chatterton received the first impulse which resulted in his premature and to him unfortunate celebrity.

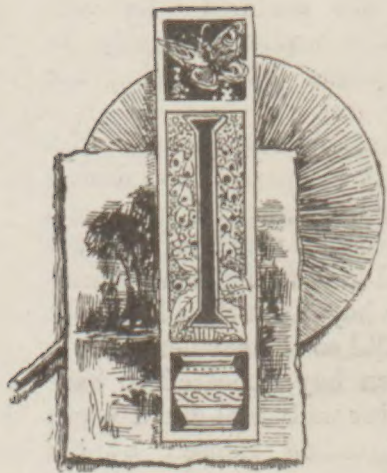
The poet Campbell is supposed to have derived something of his poetic tendency, and especially his love for the ballad poetry of Scotland, from his mother's strong taste for music. Even in the wane of life his mother used to sing the favourite melodies of her youth, "and thus her son from his cradle became skilled in sweet sounds and the power of flowing numbers."

We find, too, that the poet Crabbe's early religious impressions were strongly influenced by those of his mother, "who was a deeply devout woman. Her mildness, humility, patient endurance of affliction and sufferings strongly recommended her example to her son."

(To be continued.)

GRANNY'S LOVE STORY.

BY EDITH PRINCE-SNOWDEN,

Author of "The Silver Pine," "Conflict and Victory," etc.

"SHALL never be happy again," said May Shirley; "all the light has gone out of my life."

She was sitting in the porch of an old-fashioned house; roses and honeysuckle clustered around, and sunbeams danced upon the girl's golden head, as though proving that Nature's glory, at all events, was not banished from her young life. A letter, that had been read and re-read during

many weeks, lay on her knees, and now and again a hot tear *would* fall on the crumpled page.

"I ventured my all in one ship, and it has gone down," said May, with a heavy sigh.

"May, May," cried a gentle voice from the house. "I should enjoy a breath of air if you would help me into the garden."

May sprang up, and thrusting the letter into her pocket, hurried indoors.

"Lean on me, Granny," she said, tenderly. "Where shall we go?"

"Under the old lime-tree," said Granny. "My favourite spot when the blossom is out. It reminds me of so many things of my youth, of pleasure and pain. Why, May, it was under that tree I battled with my first real sorrow; and, years afterwards, when I could see clearer and recognise the love that had guided me in darkness, I used to go there and thank God that He had saved me from what I once had most desired."

May was silent. She knew that Granny spoke with intention, and that she wished to impress her grand-daughter with the fact that our destinies are in a wiser keeping than our own. They walked on slowly. At the end of the garden was a gate opening into a meadow, where, beneath the overhanging branches of a lime-tree, was Granny's chair, set on a carpet of daisies and flowering grasses.

"I want to see the smile that gladdened all our hearts a few months ago," said Granny, holding the slim young fingers in her wrinkled ones. "It is very hard at first to learn that our idol was but a thing of clay, and our worship a mockery."

"I can't realise it," said May, faintly. "He seemed good, true, and endowed with every quality I most admire."

"A being of your own creation," said Granny, "clothed with a beauty not his own. Child, believe me, when respect and trust have gone, our affection has been snapped at the root and become a dead thing. Dearest, I would strive to make you see that the world is still bright and beautiful, although just now you see it through a mist of tears. Listen a moment. Many years ago, so long that it must seem to you like a page of ancient history, I parted beneath this tree from one I deemed a king among men. He had come to our village bearing letters of introduction to my father, and soon became on intimate terms with most of the county families. He was one of those gifted with every accomplishment. He dazzled both young and old by his conversation and varied talent, and ere long was sole arbiter of my existence. I forgot the love of years that had grown up at my side. This dear old home of my ancestors, hallowed by a thousand memories, seemed shut away from

the noise and bustle of the world, about which I had heard such glowing descriptions, and for which I longed with a feverish anxiety. Everything was merged in the fascination of the new-comer. I lived a charmed life, and the day he quitted here he had obtained my promise to be his wife. Ah! well do I remember. This tree was in flower, and its scent always recalls that moment when I deemed the world held no bliss to equal mine.

"Months passed. From time to time my lover wrote letters teeming with affection and promises of a speedy return, which, he protested, some unforeseen circumstances had alone delayed.

"Once more it was summer. I sat here dreaming about the future, where one brilliant picture succeeded another in my youthful imagination, when I saw my mother approaching. Tears were in her eyes, and her whole attitude betokened sorrow.

"My child," she said, gently, laying her hand on my head, 'you have need of all your courage. You have a heavy trial to bear; but God, in His mercy, has saved you from a far heavier one, the life-long regret of an irrevocable mistake.'

"As she spoke, she laid in my trembling hands a short note, in which my faithless lover abruptly informed my parents that, by the time the news reached them, he would have been married abroad to a lady of high rank and great wealth.

"I will not dwell upon the sorrow, the hopeless darkness of despair that ensued. You have, you are experiencing the same. Pain and sorrow had hitherto been but empty names to me. I now learnt their fullest meaning, and drank their bitter cup to the dregs. But by-and-by, little by little, gleams of light shed their soft rays upon me; the voices of every-day duties, to which I had turned a deaf ear, made themselves heard; hope awoke once more, at first so subdued as to be unrecognisable, but afterwards lighting up every dark corner, and lifting the scales that had blinded my eyes, showed me life and its meaning in true colours, until a glow of thankfulness welled up within me, and I was grateful for the pain. Hush! don't start. It taught me so much that I needed to learn; it widened my sympathies; it opened my understanding to distinguish between the false and the true. Yes, May; notwithstanding all its agony, I look upon that time of probation as a period of priceless value, in which a loving Father, in His own way, was preparing me for the crowning happiness of my life.

"The next few years brought innumerable changes. Sickness, death, and my weighty responsibilities as mistress in the old home, where I now stood alone. In the village much had happened to prevent me dwelling morbidly upon my own troubles. Calls from rich and poor alike had filled up my days, and brought back all the old interest which for a time lay dormant.

"Your grandfather had left England shortly after my engagement to his rival was announced, and no tidings of his welfare had reached the village. One evening I had brought my book to this spot, when the opening of the gate caused me to look up, and there stood my old friend, bronzed, changed somewhat in outward appearance, but with the same true heart and faithful love.

"I scarcely know if I welcomed him. All the passion and misery of the years that had intervened, all the changes that had come and gone since we parted, seemed to rise up between us as our hands met once more. Did he know



"Holding the slim, young fingers in her wrinkled ones."

what his coming meant to me, as he sat there quietly in the twilight, talking over old friends, old hopes?

"It was late when he rose to go. I remember the moon shone full upon the meadow, turning these leaves to silver; each flower, each blade of grass was distinctly visible.

"'Have I out-stayed my welcome?' he said. 'If so, you must forgive me. I have dreamed of this meeting for years; in strange places and amid strange sights, the thought of it has been with me as the true meaning of home. Now I have come from the other side of the world, and seen you, and heard you speak, nothing remains but for me to return.'

"He stopped. Something in my face, he told me afterwards, gave him courage.

"'Must I go?' he said.

"You smile. You can hardly imagine your grandfather young and——"

"No, Granny," said May, clasping her closer. "I was only wondering if the bitter sorrow of your early life had been effaced by your after joy."

"Ten thousand times!" said Granny, fervently. "Ours is a love that has lived through sunshine and shadow, from youth to age, and that, please God, will last for all time."

THOUGHTS ON MAX MELLOW'S "HINTS TO WIVES."*



HAVING read Max Mellow's "Hints to Wives" with pleasure and profit, I forthwith accept his challenge, and offer a few remarks thereon, which I trust may not come amiss to him, or to any husband or wife either for the matter of that. First, let me premise that no sensible woman could be offended with any man who would come forward and lecture her on her home duties, as all good wives are anxious to make home happy, and it ought to be very helpful to them to get at men's views of the subject. Men and women are much more dependent upon each other for happiness than

perhaps either care to admit. How important, then, that they should understand each other and get at their ideas of domestic happiness, in order that each may be to the other all that their imagination pictured before marriage. I quite believe that men are often quite as much disappointed with their better halves, as it is very certain the wives are in many cases with their husbands. And yet a little judicious explanation might often set things right and make all clear sailing. But to proceed. I quite agree with hint the first: where the family cannot take a holiday in order that spring cleaning may be done, it had better be dispensed with altogether. By taking proper care, I never have to inflict this grievous trouble on my family. If we are ever so clean, the returning spring, which brings sunny weather in its train, is sure to show up dust, which may be got rid of without all the parade and bustle of turning everything topsy-turvy. Again, there need be no fuss or parade about washing-day, if the work be prepared beforehand, and one has a proper room, etc., for it. No one need feel any inconvenience if it be done quietly and at proper times.

Old sweethearts and shopping are things one's husband never need be troubled about, unless he is too niggardly to allow sufficient money for the latter purpose; and here I may just hint that he might economise in some of his superfluous pleasures in order to give his wife a little more cash for home and personal comfort. Also, that he should beware how he praises his mother, sisters, or the wives of his acquaintances, to the detriment of his own wife, who ought to be the best in the world in his estimation. Domestic troubles should never be made a worry to the husband, who has heavier trials of his own to bear; but after he has unburdened his heart of its load, it would only be kind in him to lead his wife to speak of her domestic affairs. His advice and sympathy would encourage her wonderfully. I suppose men think themselves above noticing such things as nick-nacks and other trifles, which brighten and make home pretty. But many a young wife has felt a keen pang of disappointment when her first efforts to make home attractive have met with no word of praise, and it is often a cause of her being less careful of her personal appearance than she was before marriage; *then* she was sure to be admired.

Motherhood, too, has its pains as well as its joys. A kind husband will not think anything too great or good for her who has perilled her life for him. A cup

of tea and a slice of bread and butter in bed before rising will often save a headache and a day's pain and weariness. Surely no good husband would begrudge this little attention himself, if he has no one else who could do it, for one so dear to him.

Then, too, he must meet and appreciate all her little efforts to please and cheer him after his day's work, if he would keep home bright and happy. The more trials a man has in his work, the more need he has of a happy home; but if he always brings home a clouded face and morose temper, he will soon find his wife's spirits fail her. How can she smile and be glad if met with gloomy looks from the one who has promised to love and cherish her?

Women have a great deal to bear—far more than men are aware of. This is especially true of the working classes. Fancy taking a young girl from the comfort, convenience, and plenty generally to be found in domestic service, to the ill-constructed, inconvenient, comfortless cottage of the farm labourer, which he is obliged to occupy through no fault of his own. Ill-paid from his youth up, it is utterly impossible for him to be able to do much towards securing a comfortable home. If those who have the power could see to it that the humbler classes had comfortable dwellings at a reasonable rent, they would do more for the health and happiness of the realm than has ever yet been effected. How many damp, smoky, or draughty cottages have been the means of sending the labourer to the public-house for the warmth and comfort he may look for in vain at home, in spite of all his wife's anxious care and ingenuity in devising means to make the place as comfortable as circumstances will admit. This may seem wandering from the mark, but it is not so, because it is happiness we are seeking after—happiness for husbands and wives of every station and condition of life—and therefore it is necessary to point out one of the ills and its cure.

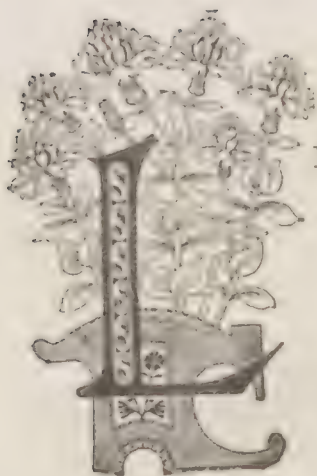
Another great evil is the want of means to provide the nourishing food a man needs to keep him in good health. There must be something wrong in our system of things somewhere. A man that works hard and is careful and saving ought to be able to get a comfortable living. Yet how can he upon 13s. per week—the pay of a farm labourer? How can he keep himself, wife, and family in comfortable circumstances on such a meagre sum? Of course he earns more just a few weeks (if the weather is favourable) in the busy seasons of the year, but that has to go for rent, fuel, tools, etc. The 13s. has to provide the food, school pence, provident and clothing club fees, etc., and wives are told what nice dinners they might provide for their families for 3d. per head, when often they have not 1d. per head to spare for the purpose.

It will easily be seen, then, that the wife has her full share of the burdens of life, and every good husband will do all in his power to repay her wifely love and care. Certain I am that men have far more influence over women and in their homes than they dream of, and they should use it for good. If this is accepted and printed I shall be very glad. Perhaps Max Mellow may be induced to write again, and an abler pen than mine carry on the subject. For the same reasons as I presume Max Mellow to be influenced by, I shall not divulge my name, but simply sign myself

WIFE AND MOTHER.

* See MOTHERS' COMPANION, January 1891.

IN A HOSPITAL WARD.



LET me alone, I want to die,"
 Those were the only words she said;
 And the patient nurse, with a pitying
 sigh
 Passed down the ward with her noise-
 less tread.
 "Let me alone, I want to die,
 To sleep, to rest from the sin and pain,
 Why do you strive to bring me back
 Into my hopeless life again?"

There were ten white beds in the cheerful room,
 But only nine had their inmates then;
 Till out of the noisy, bustling street
 A child was carried to number ten.
 A tiny child, with a wan white face,
 And a rough, bright head of flaxen hair;
 The rest of the patients looked and sighed
 To see so small a sufferer there.

"Let me alone, I want to die,"
 The woman said, and she turned aside,
 And would not listen to soothing speech,
 Or tender words of the Crucified.
 "What does it matter to me?" she moaned,
 "It is all too late for repentance now,
 And nobody cares if I live or die,
 And God will be angry, anyhow!"

The lights were low in the ward at night,
 And sleep steeped down with her blessed power,
 But one was wakeful, and full of pain,
 Counting each stroke that told the hour.
 Longing for death to come and ease
 The wearing pain and the bitter strife,
 Knowing no hope in a heaven above,
 Feeling no wish for a better life.

Hush! for the child has stirred and sighed;
 What does she say in the shadows dim?
 "Mammy, I want to go to sleep,
 May I not say my little hymn?"
 Then from a trembling, feeble voice,
 Words fall soft on the listening ear,
 Praying the gentle Lord to send
 Visions bright to His children dear.

Asking for comfort to the sick,
 Help for the sailors out at sea;
 Then the voice failed, and silence reigned,
 Somebody's tears flowed suddenly!
 Stirred by the simple, childish hymn,
 Memory woke with a throb of pain,
 Taking her back to the days gone by,
 Making her pure and good again.

What did God say to her in the night?
 How did He speak thro' the shadows dim?
 Was it too late for repentance then?
 Nay, it is never too late, with Him.
 When the first sunbeams struggled up
 Over the city's waking life,
 Comfort came to the weary soul,
 Rest to the heart worn out with strife.

No one knew when the summons came,
 No one guessed at the comfort given,
 No one thought how a childish hymn
 Helped a soul on the way to heaven.
 "Died in her sleep," the nurses said,
 Softly folding the quiet hands;
 "See, the smile on her tired face;
 God has spoken—she understands!"

FLORENCE L. HENDERSON.

MOTHERS AT HOME.

BY E. M. WATERWORTH.

II.—OUR PLEASURE—HOW TO TAKE IT.

PLEASURE is the sunshine of life. Now, what does sunshine do? To put it shortly, it brightens and fructifies the earth; it refreshes and strengthens man. There is another thing it does which is not always as welcome to us as its other acts, it shows up all the dirty corners. "What snow conceals, the sun reveals."

Pleasure does every one of these things for man. It brightens his heart, and lightens his labour; it makes him more fitted to bring forth the fruit of good deeds, of gentleness and love; it refreshes him when weary, and gives him new strength to carry on the struggle of life. Lastly, it does show up the hidden corners. Tell me how a man and woman amuse themselves, tell me how they spend their spare time, and I will tell you pretty correctly what sort of people they are.

Many a man who is sober, honest, and civil while he is hard at work, degenerates into a drunken sot when he is out for a holiday; and it would often be difficult for a mistress to recognise her ordinarily neatly-dressed, quiet-spoken

servant in the tawdry finery and impudent manner which she assumes when it is her "Sunday out."

But we will hope that none of the mothers who read these pages are of this kind; probably many of you have as much as you can do to make both ends meet, without a thought of wasting money on finery or pleasure.

Now this is a state of affairs I want you to alter. "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy," and from my experience of the race, I am pretty well convinced that if play is so necessary for Jack, it is fifty thousand times more so for Jack's mother and father. The boys who will work themselves into stupidity or illness are few indeed in number, but the men and women who seem by circumstances compelled to do so, are legion.

Pleasure is necessary for all of us if we would not descend to the level of the beasts that perish without a hope beyond this life.

"Be not like dumb driven cattle,
 Be a hero in the strife."



"It is all very well to talk," perhaps some hard-worked woman is thinking, "but what are you to do if you can't find time or money? Pleasure, indeed; my life is made up of work and pain."

Alas, alas, that it should be so, my poor sister, but are you quite sure that by a little management you could not let in a little sunshine? Only a very little, perhaps, a tiny *blink* as one of our best writers calls it, but what a difference that blink would make. Listen to what he says:

"In the driving, worrying day (unless we are to break down altogether) there must be some

little blink of rest. It may be ever so short. But the time must be when we can sit and gaze into the winter fire, and vaguely muse, if but for a few minutes; in which we can look out on the summer twilight if but for a little while and rest. I have known some who through anxious and laborious years had but very little of this; but they would have died had they not had some little, and they made much of it.

"The driver of a London omnibus said to a passenger who sat beside him, and who inquired with unfeigned sympathy as to the little ways of his life, 'It's a long afternoon, but when I get up to Highgate about six o'clock, I get my cup of tea, and *that is something to look forward to.*'

"A little thing serves, you see, to keep a poor human creature from breaking down. And we have all of us our 'blinks' of mild enjoyment, hardly known to any other mortal, which keep us on our feet. These come daily, once or twice or more in the day. If we told an unsympathetic soul about them, the unsympathetic soul would think us fools, as indeed we should be, for talking about them to the unsympathetic soul."

"Those who have good long blinks of rest in each day, and those to whom the Lord's Day is indeed a Sabbath rest, may manage to get on wonderfully without anything more. But there are others on whom month by month a weariness of soul and body grows, which asks for the longer blink of the yearly holiday. This may be short, but it ought to be complete."

Let us consider then first how each of us can manage to get a blink of pleasure in our daily life, and by that time we shall probably see the way open to look forward to one grand, restful holiday once a year.

To begin with, we must not forget the value of *little* things. The hard-worked man or woman is far too much inclined to go in for the all-or-nothing principle. Because we

cannot spend a couple of hours in pleasure is that a reason why we should not have five minutes or a quarter of an hour? In spite of all that may be comically observed to the contrary, half a loaf is better than no bread; and it is childish to persist in keeping the sunshine out of our lives because we can only let in a little bit at a time.

What pleasure many of us find in books! The monthly magazine is quite an event in many lives, and why should it only happen once a month? Free libraries are cropping up in all directions, and what is there to prevent a woman from enjoying a good book? The husband or the bigger children could often take turns in reading aloud whilst the mother worked in the evening. Good wholesome books are some of the best and brightest blinks that can be let into any home.

Then as to games. Why should not dominoes, draughts, chess, and such games be played? Supposing you have not time yourself, it will amuse you to keep one eye on the game and the other on your work, instead of going on stitch, stitch, stitch, as if life were made up only of needle and thread, and man had not a soul which longed for something less tiresome. There is a delightful new game called Halma, which is easier than chess and more interesting than draughts, and I believe firmly that if books and such games were more often found in our cottages, the bar parlours would be less used.

Other games there are, such as proverbs, characters, word-making, which the busiest woman could join in, her tongue being free, however much her fingers may be tied; and surely it is better to employ the unruly member in such a way, helping to amuse and distract ourselves and others, than to grumble, nag, or pick our neighbours to pieces.

What a help it is to many women to have a little store of poetry in their minds. I know one lady who by sad circumstances was reduced to living in one room, and doing all her own work. She told me she used to sing to herself when she could, and if not she would repeat all the things she could remember whilst she was working.

Something nice to think about is one of the best daily pleasures you can have. A few minutes' chat with a friend, how it lifts up our hearts and sends us back to our work with redoubled energy. Try, do try, to let each day have its little ray of sunshine; you cannot think what a difference it will make to your temper and to your energy.

Now, as to the yearly holiday. Let me start by one all-important exhortation, take your pleasure *reasonably*.

If Sir John Lubbock were to spend one Bank Holiday evening standing in one of our main roads, leading, perhaps, to Epping or some other popular resort, I firmly believe he would go home quite undecided as to whether he had done unmixed good by the boon which he gained for the people. Never shall I forget two cartloads which I saw last August—young men and women, hardly out of their teens, with cut faces and bound-up heads, crammed together like so many beasts for market, and every one of them "dead drunk." It was a sight to haunt you for ever.

That, thank God, is perhaps the exception in holiday-making, and yet there is no doubt that many of us do not take our pleasure reasonably. We seem to lose our heads when we go for a holiday.

"We don't come out for a treat every day," says the jovial father, and he spends every penny he possesses, forgetting that he and his children will have to suffer for it afterwards.

Save up for your holiday. It is a good plan, and you

will find it answer well, but as I hope to speak to you about money by and by, I will say no more on that subject now.

I wonder whether any of you have ever tried a walking tour. If not, let me strongly recommend it, if you can manage to take only such of the children as can walk well. If you can get away with your husband alone, so much the better. I have tried most ways of getting about, and can honestly recommend shank's pony as being as good as many and better than some.

You need not go far if you are living in London. There are lanes and woods, hills and valleys as beautiful in Surrey as you would find in Yorkshire. Make yourselves a light bag of mackintosh or waterproof material to hold a few necessities, sling it over your shoulder to hang on the hip, take a stick or umbrella, put on a light woollen outside garment in case of showers, a hat or bonnet which will not get dragged and spoilt by rain, a strong pair of boots, and off you go.

Make a plan of your tour before starting, taking care to begin with only a moderate day's walk of six to eight miles. Live on eggs and milk, and only a little meat; take no intoxicants, go to bed early and get up early, and if you do not enjoy a week's walk you must be harder to please than I am.

Take your pleasure *thoroughly*; you will be the better able to work afterwards, and, whatever you do, don't forget to make the most of small mercies.

"Some murmur, when their sky is clear
And wholly bright to view,
If one small speck of dark appear
In their great heaven of blue.
And some with thankful love are fill'd
If but one streak of light,
One ray of God's good mercy gild
The darkness of their night."

"SARAH" FOR THE LORD.

A SKETCH FROM LIFE.

We were at our wits' end for a cook. We had ransacked newspapers, and besieged registry offices, and worried our friends and neighbours, and uttered plaintive appeals in all directions; but, alas, there seemed no available female bold and brave enough to undertake the onerous duty of receiving high wages, enjoying frequent holidays, and innumerable "evenings out," making away with unlimited perquisites, and brow-beating

generally the family in which she condescended to reside.

Matters were getting serious, and we were, indeed, on the eve of being left dependent on our housemaid, who, though willing enough, was quite unable to undertake cooking and cleaning in addition to her usual duties. In a moment of desperation somebody whispered, "Let's try a Salvation Army girl!" The suggestion was a novel one, and the originator of it displayed a cool intrepidity we all admired, for, hitherto, though we had often felt sympathy for Army work, and even sent contributions thereto, we had never for a moment entertained the idea of establishing a "Hallelujah lass," tambourine and all, under our own roof!

"Any port," however, "in a storm," and though the new proposal was not received exactly with acclamation, it was



"What is there to prevent a woman from enjoying a good book?"

thought worth a trial, and a letter was dispatched to the Army Registrar, a list of "soldiers" being duly forwarded by return of post. After vainly searching in sheer desperation for the shadow of anything in the form of a domestic, it was quite refreshing to have a whole list of names, six or eight, set out, from which to choose. Several candidates for the privilege of preparing our dinners lived in the neighbourhood, so I lost no time in looking them up. I met, it is true, with a few disappointments; but my efforts finally resulted in the engagement of a thorough "soldier" as our prospective cook.

Victoria Jenkins was rather short, and slightly lame. Moreover, she was not very experienced, but Mother liked the look of her greatly, and as she seemed very anxious to come, and actually made no stipulations about wages, arrangements were soon concluded. For the first few days I was a good deal occupied in directing and teaching our new maid, and though she provoked me now and then with some rather stupid mistakes, I was very pleased with her nice teachable manner, and evident willingness both to own her ignorance and to learn better. She did her best, too, to try to understand just how we wished everything done. A little difficulty, however, arose, though one, it is true, which seemed easily surmounted. The "soldier's" Christian name was, manifestly, an unsuitable one for every-day use, and it had been proposed, therefore, to call her "Mary." This cognomen, however, happened to be my own, though, to be sure, another was commonly used. Still, it seemed undesirable to adopt it, and, after a little family consultation, "Sarah" was fixed upon as short, and neat, and appropriate in every way.

The next evening, therefore, Mother innocently proposed the change to the new domestic, thinking that very likely the name indicating "a princess" might be very acceptable to the "Hallelujah lass." But she was disappointed. Victoria had not been seen to manifest so much feeling before, feeling amounting, indeed, almost to indignation. "Oh, ma'am," she said, suddenly covering her face with both hands, "oh ma'am, don't call me 'Sarah,' please, 'tis such an *ugly* name! Call me anything else you like, but *don't* call me 'Sarah.'"

For a moment Mother was a little bit vexed, as the objection seemed rather an unreasonable one, but when she told me, and we talked it over together, we both felt that a change must certainly be made. "Poor girl," said Mother, "we can't call her by a name she dislikes. It would be very hard and unkind. We must think of another, and make her feel comfortable and contented about it." So the name of "Sarah" was discarded, and, after some further consultation, that of "Alice" chosen instead, as one likely to give satisfaction, and also short and easy to say.

Feeling sure of a favourable reception for my proposal, I descended next morning to the kitchen, intending to set our soldier at once quite at ease about her future name. After giving orders for dinner, and before entering upon the debated question, my new maid and I slipped into a little friendly talk about all work being done, by the Christian, for the Lord, and as in His sight, when, suddenly, Victoria surprised me by saying, "Oh, miss, I had been wondering so what I could do for the Lord here. I couldn't see at all that there was really *anything*, and then, last night, when mistress told me I was to be called 'Sarah,' oh, I thought,

at first, I couldn't bear it." Here I interrupted Victoria with, "And you shall not have to bear it, either. You shall not be called 'Sarah' if you do not like it. Don't be unhappy about that. We should not think of giving you a name you really disliked."

Judge of my surprise when the girl replied with a warmth of feeling quite equal to that she had displayed before, but evidently arising from a different source. "Oh! Miss," she said, "I don't want to have any other name. Please call me 'Sarah' after all." Rather bewildered by this seeming perversity, I asked an explanation.

"Well, Miss," returned Victoria, more slowly and thoughtfully, "after mistress told me last night about being called 'Sarah,' and I up and says I didn't like it, I was a-thinking it over as I went about my work, and it seemed something like this. You see I'd asked the Lord what He'd got for me to do for Him here, for Army soldiers always have to be under orders, you know. And, maybe, for an answer, the Lord sent me this little bit of a trial, just to be called by a name I didn't fancy, so I said to myself—Perhaps, Victoria, this is what the Lord asks you to do for Him. Perhaps you're not to bear persecution for the Lord, or to suffer pain for the Lord, which, of course, would be plain and straight enough; but, maybe, you're to be called 'Sarah' for the Lord. And then, miss," she went on, "it all looked so different, and 'Sarah' seemed quite a nice name; so now I shouldn't like to change it, you see. Mistress chose 'Sarah,' and I hadn't ought to have spoken up so hasty about it; so please forgive me, and let me keep to 'Sarah' always."

Of course we could not refuse a plea so quaintly urged. Indeed, we were so much struck with the simple, child-like spirit of the earnest young "soldier" that no other name than "Sarah" could ever have seemed fitting by which to call her. "Sarah," therefore, Victoria became, and "Sarah" she remains to this day; and though she is by no means a genius at her work, and perhaps will never develop into a thoroughly competent servant, yet we are not anxious to supply her place with any other, for there runs through all her duties the same loyal spirit of ready obedience to her Captain in heaven, and, under Him, to those set over her on earth.

Is it not a spirit, too, that needs sorely to be manifested more fully in the hearts of the best of us? Great things we can do (or we think so) in the service of our Lord and for His sake; sacrifices can, perhaps, be made which call forth the admiration of friends, or set us in an honourable position, or bring us credit of some kind; but simple submission, or silent obedience in little, unnoticed matters that vex and irritate us, this is hard; nay, it is an unattainable grace, save in the spirit of One who said, "I came not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me." If we have no high commission to exalted and splendid service for the Lord, under whose banner we serve; if we have no bitter cross to take up meekly for His sake; if we have, just now, no overwhelming trial to encounter in which we may display a rare and heroic Christian fortitude, may we not put up with somebody's "short" temper, or wear a shabby dress, or take a misunderstanding patiently, or forget a fancied slight, or forego some trifling plan for the day's occupation, counting each and all among our marching orders, and making them thus as sweet and sacred duties as being called "Sarah" for the Lord?

LUCY TAYLOR.

MOTHER'S ROOM.

'Tis the cheeriest room in the household,
With window-seat battered and bruised;
Where the carpets, the chairs, and the table
Are never too good to be used.

Here little ones come with their sorrows,
Or bubble with laughter and noise;
Bring sweetest caresses and kisses,
And scatter their books with their toys.

There's an unceasing patter of small feet,
An opening and shutting of doors;
And the room that was swept and garnished
Is covered with spoils and stores.

In the dawn of a summer morning
There's a scampering down the stairs,
And every one knows they are coming,
They whisper so loud their affairs.

And when the day's lesson is over,
They come, with their chatter and song,
To the sunniest room, where dear mother
And all that is lovely belong.

If the threads of their life get tangled,
She quietly straightens them out,
And gathers them, sweetly united,
Her little low rocker about.

Dear mother, o'er all presiding,
O! honoured and beautiful queen,
You gather your loving subjects
With a grace that is rarely seen.

Then who, to keep spotless and tidy
The carpets and windows and doors,
Would lose the sweet laughter of childhood,
And love from such beautiful stores?

WORN-OUT HANDS.

WE can see them every day. Poor, worn-out hands, trembling, wrinkled and unsightly; yet to me how beautiful they are! They have done so much. Their loving work began in infancy. That was many, many years ago, when they, too, were dimpled and white. What tiny hands they were!

But we find it hard to believe that grandma ever was a baby. We can hardly picture her in the dainty robes she must have worn. Still, she had her niche in the happy household, and filled it after her own perfect baby fashion. Father and mother both felt the tender touch of her soft, caressing fingers. The former went forth to his daily toil with renewed strength and courage, and the latter's added duties only seemed to grow lighter as the days flew by.

Baby grew fast. A few years later, what busy little hands she had! They were thrust into everything, and if destruction followed, "Help mamma" was the sweet excuse which always shielded their pretty owner. But soon they were a help indeed; always willing and ready. Ah, what busy hands they were!

And they were destined to become still dearer. Only a few more years, and then an impatient lover had circled one slender finger with a golden engagement ring. They seemed the warmest hands he had ever clasped. Love was the only match-maker, and their marriage quickly followed. Charles would have his way. How they missed her—father, mother, brothers, and sisters—when those dear hands had vanished to deftly make ready the new home nest! They beautified it until the proud young husband thought there could be no lovelier spot in all the wide, wide world.

Another year; they were mother-hands then, and their real life-work had just begun, and, if possible, they were more diligent than ever before. They even found time for other work outside the little home. The needy, sick, and afflicted were helped in a thousand different ways. They were benevolent hands.

And years of peace, happiness, and prosperity were given them in return. Twice had the cosy home been enlarged; the loved faces God had sent filled it to overflowing.

After a time one left it, never to return. How the patient, pitying mother-hands hovered round that dear one in the last sad hour! They tremblingly closed the sightless eyes, gathered sweet, fresh roses to lay on the downy pillow,

tenderly raised the coffin-lid for one last look, and, finally, planted flowers on the newly-made grave. After that the home-work went on as usual, only there was one less to do for. How strange it seemed!

One by one the others also left her side; the boys to make their way in the great Babylon called town, and the girls to exchange the old home for new ones here and there.

Then, after thirty years of earnest, loving toil, her tired hands took a little needed rest. All the children had gone from her. There was only husband to care for now, and his wants were so few in comparison with what theirs had been! He was growing older; but surely he was now dearer than ever. The children could live without her. As in the beginning, he was again her all.

But ten years later he was taken from her. Oh, the agony of that parting! His dying kiss fell upon her dear, tear-wet hands that had always scattered flowers along his life-path. They fashioned his shroud. She would not suffer a strange hand to perform that last sad service. Soon he peacefully slept in the little village churchyard, and she all alone in the old nest. How empty it was! Her hands are quite idle now. No work to do, no loved ones to wait upon.

At her tearful request, one child, a daughter, returned bringing with her five fatherless little ones. Then grandma gladly took up the broken threads of her life-work. There was still so much to be done. It seemed as though all her children were back again. She knew just what to do for them. Their many childish wants and necessities were to her an open book, which she read with delight. Little Charles was grandpa's namesake. How she loved the bonny boy!

But at last the grandchildren left home just as her own had done. Grandma's loving farewell followed them like a blessing. They can never forget her.

She is almost ninety now. There she sits in the roomy rocking-chair in which dear grandpa died thirty long years ago. Soon she will join him in heaven. Her work is all done; she is only waiting.

Poor, worn-out hands! Age and disease have crippled them, but they are not unsightly. No, no! Some day they will be folded, cold and white, upon her breast; and the sweet rest of the weary will be hers at last.

DRESS AND DRESSMAKING.

Now that summer is really close at hand, and new dresses, jackets and bonnets have to be purchased, a little chit-chat as to the most economical way to go to work may not prove untimely. The mornings and evenings are still quite cool, and it may be necessary to have a spring jacket to slip on over the thinner dresses. All who noticed



Fig. 12.

the greatly reduced prices of jackets at the recent sales, will not be surprised to find that new ones of a very different type are now to take their place. The spring seal plush ones are being trimmed in various devices with fancy and plain silk. Many have a waistcoat, revers and cuffs of silk. We would advise all who have short ones to have them renovated, and wear them out, as they will look old-fashioned to take out for autumn use. The new jackets now showing are, without exception, considerably longer than last season's shape. The "cut away" will still hold its own, but will be lengthened to a depth of several inches; the shortest are twenty inches in length, and are as long at the backs as the fronts. The old favourite coat-shaped jacket has again, without much difficulty, made its way to the front.

The Newmarket illustration here (fig. 12) shown is made of a light summer twilled serge. It is thirty inches long, and takes one and a half yards of double width material. The pockets, collar, revers and cuffs are lined with tailor's stiffening, which gives a neat, set appearance to the jacket. The bottom, fronts, revers, collar, cuffs and pocket flaps are faced with Italian cloth, the facing down the fronts to be much wider than on the other parts, to strengthen the material for buttons, etc. The jacket fastens in



Fig. 14.

the ordinary way, down the side, with smoked pearl buttons.

Most of us are glad to find that although there have been several efforts made to introduce draped skirts and tunics, the plain, simply-made design is still in the ascendant. Many plain skirts, with three small frills round the bottom, will be worn this summer, and Princess robes are once more to take their place in the front ranks of fashion.

The shop windows are full of pretty spring materials, nun's veiling and woollen crêpe in every shade being largely exhibited. The long-popular light grey colour has at length been superseded by a pale bluish green. The dress here illustrated (fig. 13) is of Strathpeffer cheviot, a woollen material similar to a tweed. The colour is of dark fawn, with broken lines of brown and white. The skirt is quite plain across the front, with a double box-pleat at the sides, the back being formed into knife pleats.

Perhaps, as a consequence of half long jackets, we have now long basqued bodices, the one shown having very much the appearance of the Newmarket jacket, with the exception of the waistcoat, which would look well with either brown silk, or white flannel braided in brown; the revers of brown silk. Fourteen yards of material and one of silk will be sufficient for the costume.

Our last topic is hats and bonnets, always a matter of especial interest. Sometimes it is the shape, at others the colour and trimming, or again both, which call forth remark. The present styles are simple and becoming, and will ensure favour with all young ladies. One new hat is three cornered shape, one corner being in the front, the others at the sides.

It is made of fine straw; a fold of silk goes round the edge, to hide the wire, and is trimmed with ribbon, a bow being placed at the back. Another hat, which will be found useful and very becoming as the summer advances, is a large round straw, which can be prettily trimmed with lace and ribbon; a very small ruche of the former will make a pretty finish round the edge.

The pattern bonnet shown (fig. 14), is made of silk, with a twist of the same material round the brim, pom-pons and a ribbon bow adorning the back, the pom-pons being made of the odd cuttings of the silk. The strings are made of the silk, a strip on the cross being used for the purpose. One yard of silk will make and trim the bonnet.

Flat patterns can be supplied: Fig. 12, 6½d.; fig. 13, Body and Skirt, 1s. 0½d., Body alone, 6½d. Address, "M. C. Pattern," 9, Paternoster Row, London, E.C.



Fig. 13.